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DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS AND MINING

March 5, 2001

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Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining  
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RE: Initial Review of Notice of Intention to commence Large Mining operations.

Dear D. Wayne Hedberg:

The following comments and Commitments are provided in response to your letter of January 31, 2001, same subject.

✓ R 647-104 No comment required.

*needed*  
R 647-105.2-3 We will submit maps drawings and photographs as required by this section. However, this work must be deferred until the next field season, since the property is not accessible at this time.

✓ R 647-4-106.2 Mining will proceed by ripping, stockpiling and loading in the area shown in appendix 3 of the No I. The high wall will gradually be extended to the East and Southeast. Equipment used will be a tracked Bulldozer with rippers, Caterpillar D-8H or equivalent and a wheeled loader, Caterpillar 970 F or equivalent.

R 647-4-106.3 Depth of the mineral deposit in the floor of the pit is in excess of 100 ft in many places. The best method of mining and conserving this mineral resource is by a stepped or tiered mining approach where the ore is extracted at more that one level. Only the first layer has been removed by the present mining activity. Long-term plans in the 10 to 20 year range will require a second tier to be removed from the same area of the pit. In the interim, the floor of the pit will be used for stockpiling and loading ore. It would not appear to be practical to undertake interim reclamation. Consequently we do not plan partial reclamation in the next 5 years.

106. 4 We will provide estimates of the volumes requested as soon as the property is accessible during the next field season. Estimates beyond the current 5-year projections would not be very meaningful. The deposit is large and the potential mining period could be 50 years or more. However, the market is tenuous with the users actively looking for replacement materials located more advantageously. Production quantities for even the coming season are speculative. Past experience indicates that production periods may be



interspersed with periods of little or no production. However, the mineral resource will remain and will eventually be needed and used.

106. 5

*needed*

Estimates of the amount of soil will be prepared during the coming field season. The question of soil depth will also be examined. The soil depth does vary from one spot to another. In general, very little soil exists at the site. This was especially true in the area where mining was begun. The mineral resource was fully exposed with little or no soil cover. Mining activity is now moving to an area where somewhat more soil cover exists. We have stockpiled all the soil that has been disturbed during our operations. This question can be clarified during the coming field season.

106. 6

Our copy of the original plan does not refer to stabilizing topsoil stockpiles. We can, however, agree to do this. The seed mix suggested is acceptable. It may provide experience, which could be valuable, when the actual reclamation is performed.

106. 7

*X*

Our copy of the original mining and reclamation plan contain the following: " 4 – What vegetation exists on the land proposed to be affected. Sagebrush, Quaking Aspen.

(a) Types and estimated percent cover or density. Sage 50%, Aspen 5%.

Our observation over a period of years confirm these estimates.

✓ 107. 1

All trash, scrap, or debris generated, will be removed from the site or will be buried in the grading process.

107-1. 14

*refer to FS*

Warning signs will be posted during the coming field season. It is currently illegal for ATVs or other vehicles to leave the established roads. Perhaps some signage reminding people of this law should do as much good as any attempt to fence it off.

✓ 107. 3

The assumption that no contaminated run-off will leave the pit is correct. If this situation changes we will notify the Division and submit the required plans.

107. 5

See comments under 106.5

✓ 107. 6

No reclamation is anticipated during the next 5 years.

✓ 109. 1

Runoff will be prevented by maintaining the floor of the disturbed area at a level lower than the surrounding ground. Snow melt or rainwater will be contained within the pit area until it evaporates or is absorbed.

✓ 109. 4

Please refer to comments under R 647 – 4 – 107. 1. 14, signs will be posted.



✓ 110. 1

In paragraph 3, our copy of the original Mining and Reclamation Plan gives the Prior Land use as "grazing". It also gives the possible or prospective land use as "grazing". In paragraph 4 it answers the question. "Will the affected (reclaimed) area be subject to livestock and wildlife grazing"? with a yes. This amendment will not make any changes in the post mining land use.

110. 2 ?

Our copy of the Mining and Reclamation Plan provides in paragraph 1 under "Following Operations" that: "area disturbed will be regraded to stable slopes of less than 45°. More recent documents emanating from the division have referred to 20° slopes but have made exceptions for "highwall" or bedrock area to remains at 45°. We believe it would be a mistake to insist on 20° slopes for the highwall and bedrock areas. It would make it necessary to greatly increase the disturbed area in order to find the necessary materials to accomplish the task, as well as greatly increasing the cost beyond the estimates used when I assumed the reclamation responsibility. We will commit to 20° slopes if exceptions are made for highwall and bedrock areas at less than 45°.

✓ 110. 3

All facilities will be removed or reclaimed. None will be left for post mining use.

110. 5

- ✓ 1. The seed mix is acceptable
- ? 2. The original plan calls for no manure or mulch to be applied. To include these items now would greatly increase the cost estimates on which the reclamation responsibility was assumed.
- ? 3. Refer to discussion under paragraph 110. 2 Exceptions should be made for highwall and bedrock areas.

✓ 111.1. 12

See comments under 107. 1 Trash and debris will be removed or buried in the grading process.

✓ 112. 2

Before mining activity began, there were no visible drainage channels within the mine area, only slopes covered with rather hard Kaolinite. This material is not readily erodible and the surface was rather smooth with no channels in evidence. Accordingly, no restoration or reconstruction is indicated. The reclaimed surface will be sloped to retain snowmelt or rainwater within the reclaimed pit area. See comments under 107. 3.

✓ 111. 3

Reclamation shall be conducted in a manner such that sediment from disturbed areas is adequately controlled. The soil, topography, water drainage or other characteristics do not present any unusual problems. Accordingly no extraordinary precautions are anticipated or required.

✓ 111. 5

The seed mix is acceptable, however, whether the land can be upgraded to what



might be considered "wildlife habitat" is questionable, considering the elevation (8600 ft) the soils available in the immediate area. See comment under 110. 1. Grazing appears to be the only achievable future use.

111. 6     ?  
1     See comment under paragraph 110. 2. Exceptions need to be made for high wall and bedrocks areas.

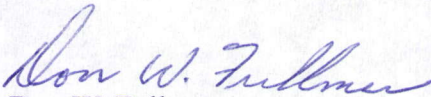
✓ 111. 7     That portion of the overburden presently stored at the site that will not be required for establishing a growth medium, will be used as a backfill to reduce pit highwalls at 45 ° or less.

111. 12     X     After final grading, soil materials will be redistributed, on a stable surface, so as to minimize erosion, prevent over compaction and promote revegetation. Quantities of stockpiled soil will be evaluated during the approaching field season.

✓ R647 - 4-112     No comment required

✓ R647 - 4-113     We will proceed as soon as weather permits to visit the property and provide the additional information as committed in the preceding paragraphs.

Sincerely,

  
Don W. Fullmer